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MAPPING LABRADOR BECAME HER RELIGION: THE STORY OF MINA HUBBARD

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1. Introduction

This article rests on a vignette about Mina Hubbard that appeared in my book, *Map Worlds: A History of Women in Cartography* [van den Hoonard 2014]. Hart's edited biography [Hart 2005] of Mina Hubbard served as the basis of this overview. Others have written about Hubbard, including Davidson [1997]. I refer the reader to both of these accounts about the Labrador expeditions.

When writers offer a scholarly set of papers about a Canadian mapper, republish her travel diary, and even devote a quasi-fictional account, we are compelled to pay attention. That mapper is Mina Hubbard (1870–1956), whose trajectory took her to map one of North America's most challenging regions, namely Labrador. Even one of Canada's most gripping story tellers, Pierre Berton, could not resist speaking about Hubbard's daring sojourn [Berton 1978]. This article discusses Mina Hubbard's background, her stamina, and her techniques in mapping Labrador. It also delves into the contributions she made to Canadian cartography.

2. Her Background

Born on April 15, 1870, to an immigrant family in rural Ontario, Canada, Mina Benson had six siblings. Her mother was from Yorkshire, England,



Figure 1: 'On the Trail'—Mina Hubbard in Labrador.¹

and had immigrated to Canada when she was a child and her father had immigrated to Canada from Ireland during the Great Potato Famine. Mina's parents

raised her and her siblings according to strict Methodist beliefs.

After teaching for 10 years in an elementary school, Mina decided to

¹ Source: *A woman's way through unknown Labrador: an account of the exploration of the Nascaupsee and George rivers, by Mrs. Leonidas Hubbard*; London: John Murray, 1908.